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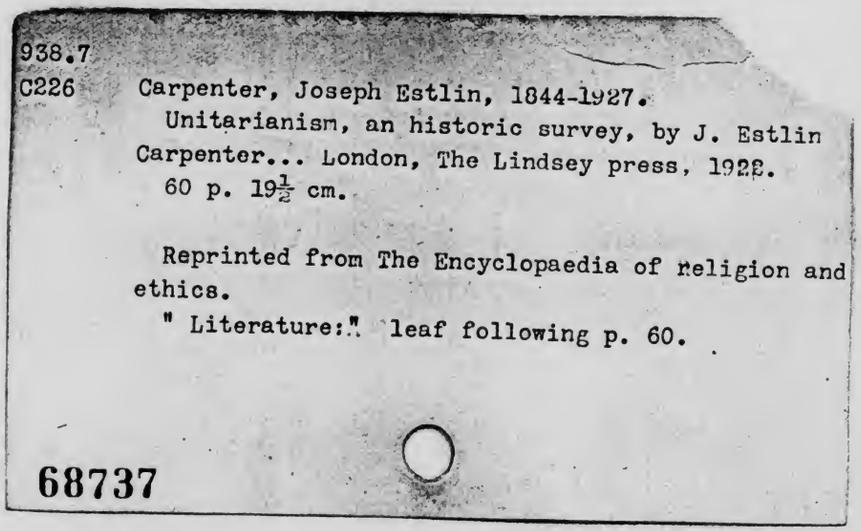
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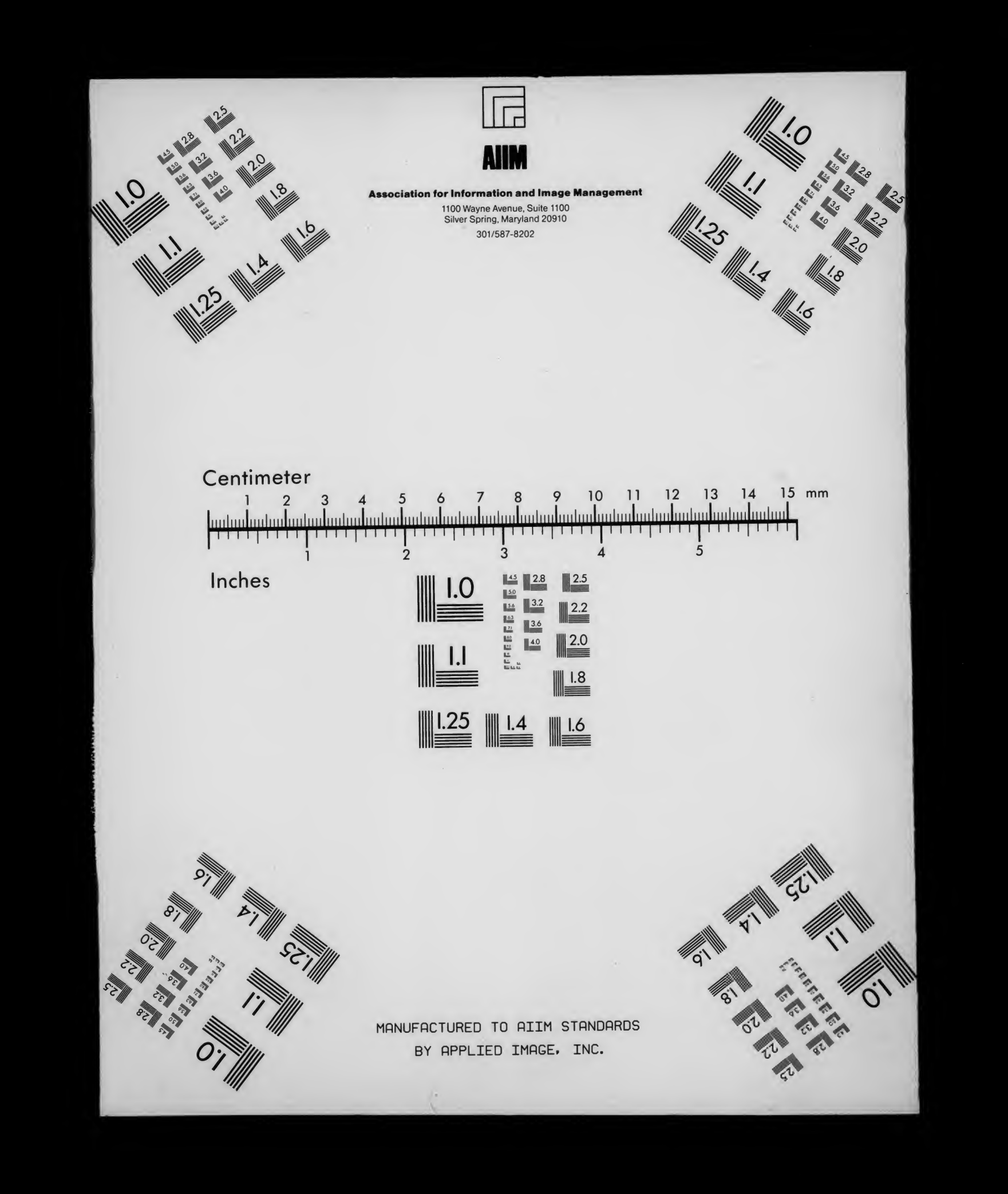
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Unitarianism

An historic survey

BY

J. ESTLIN CARPENTER, M.A., D.Litt.

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July, 1922.

UNITARIANISM

UNITARIANISM, an English term derived from the Latin *unitarius* (first used of a legalized religion in 1600[1]), is applied to a mode of religious thought and organization founded on the conception of the single personality of the Deity in contrast to the orthodox doctrine of his triune nature. The corresponding term "Trinitarian" was first used in the modern sense by Servetus in 1546. The adjective "Unitarian" has sometimes been employed beyond the limits of Christianity—e.g., in connexion with Muhammadanism; this article deals only with the development of modern Unitarianism on Christian lines. The place of the corresponding doctrine in the New Testament and the early Church must be studied in the usual authorities on historical theology.

[1] See § 4 below.

I. BEGINNINGS ON THE CONTINENT

The general movement of humanism at the opening of the 16th cent. led to a variety of speculation which was largely stimulated by the publication of the Greek text of the New Testament by Erasmus (1516). His omission of the famous Trinitarian verse, 1 John 5^7, and his aversion to the scholastic type of disputations, produced a marked effect on many minds. The earliest literary trace of anti-Trinitarian tendencies is usually found in a treatise of Martin Cellarius (1499-1564), pupil of Reuchlin, and at first a follower and friend of Luther. In 1527 he published at Strassburg a work entitled *de Operibus Dei*, in which he used the term *deus* of Christ in the same sense in which Christians also might be called *dei* as "sons of the Highest." The first treatise of Servetus (1511-53), *de Trinitatis Erroribus*, followed in 1531. The minds of the young were on the alert. Teachers, theologians, lawyers, physicians, mathematicians, men of letters and science, were all astir. They travelled and discussed, and new views

were carried far and wide. In Naples a young Spaniard, John Valdes, became the centre of a religious group of noble ladies for the study of the Scriptures till his death in 1541; and in 1539 Melanchthon found it necessary to warn the Venetian senate of the existence of widespread Servetianism in N. Italy. Out of this circle comes Bernard Ochino (1487-1565) of Siena, who passes slowly through Switzerland to London, serves as one of the pastors of the Strangers' Church (1550-53) till it is broken up by Queen Mary, takes shelter again in Zürich, and finally migrates to Poland in 1559, and joins the anti-Trinitarian party. There Catherine Vogel, a jeweller's wife, had been burned at the age of 80 in 1539 at Cracow for believing in "the existence of one God, creator of all the visible and the invisible world, who could not be conceived by the human intellect."[1] An anti-Trinitarian movement showed itself at the second synod of the Reformed Church in 1556, and in

[1] Wallace, *Antitrinitarian Biography*, ii. 139, quoting Polish historians.

1558 secured a leader in the person of a Piedmontese physician, George Blandrata. Dutch Anabaptists started various heretical movements, and David Joris of Delft (1501-56) declared in his *Wonder-book* (1542) that there is but "one God, sole and indivisible, and that it is contrary to the operation of God throughout creation to admit a God in three persons." Thousands of Protestants from Germany, Alsace, and the Low Countries, migrated to England in the reign of Henry VIII, and the Strangers' Church under Edward VI, contained also Frenchmen, Walloons, Italians, and Spaniards.

2. BEGINNINGS IN ENGLAND

English thought was not unaffected. In the 15th cent. Reginald Peacock, bishop of Chichester, had opened the way by his two treatises, the *Repressor of overmuch Blaming of the Clergy*[1] and the *Book of Faith*,[2] to the discussion of the relative values of Scripture, tradition, and reason as grounds of faith, and had pleaded for freedom of investigation. Lollard and Anabaptist diverged in different directions from orthodoxy along independent lines. On 28th Dec. 1548 a priest named John Assheton abjured before Cranmer the "damnable heresies" that "the Holy Ghost is not God, but only a certain power of the Father," and that "Jesus Christ, that was conceived of the Virgin Mary, was a holy prophet . . . but was not the true and living God." In the following April a commission was appointed to search out all Anabaptists, heretics, or contemners of the Common Prayer. A number of London tradesmen were brought before this body in May. The opinions which they recanted included the statements "that there was no Trinity of persons; that Christ was only a holy prophet and not at all God; that all we had by Christ was that he taught us the way to heaven."[1] Occasional

[1] Ed. C. Babington (Rolls series, xix. 1, 2), London, 1860.

[2] Ed. J. L. Morison, Glasgow, 1909.

[1] Gilbert Burnet, *History of the Reformation of the Church of England*, London, 1679-81, bk. i., new ed., Oxford, 1829, ii. 229.

executions took place, such as that of the surgeon George van Parris, of Mainz, in 1551 for saying that God the Father was the only God, and Christ was not very God. The Eastern counties, being in constant communication with Holland, supplied most of the victims, down to Bartholomew Legate, of Essex, who declared Christ a "mere man," but "born free from sin," and who was the last sufferer by Smithfield fires (1612), and Edward Wightman, who was burned a month later at Lichfield, charged with ten various heresies as incongruous as those of Ebion, Valentinus, Arius, and Manes.[1] One foreign teacher, Giacomo Aconzio (Latinized as Acontius, born at Trent about 1520), held his own through the troubled times. Engineer and theologian, philosopher and lawyer, mathematician and poet, he came to England in 1559, and received a post at Elizabeth's court,

[1] Anti-Trinitarian opinions were developed in the first Baptist Church founded in London in 1613, by Thomas Helwys. See W. H. Burgess, *John Smith, the Se-Baptist*, London, 1911.

which he managed to retain even when Bishop Grindal excommunicated him two years later for advocating tolerance to Anabaptists. In his *Stratagemata Satanæ*[1] he drew a distinction between articles of faith necessary to salvation and beliefs derived from them which might be matters of dispute. Adhering to Scripture, he declared the Father to be "the only true God"; affirmed the moral, not the essential, filiation of Jesus Christ; and asserted the subordination of the Holy Spirit to the Father. But the time was not yet come for his full influence in England.

3. TYPES OF SPECULATION

Three types of speculation were thus in the European field by the middle of the 16th century. (1) That of Servetus was founded on the "dispositio" of Irenæus and the "economy" of Tertullian;[2] the Trinity was a Trinity of manifestations or modes of operation; when God is all in all (1 Cor. 15^{28}), "the

[1] Basel, 1565. [2] *De Trin. Error*, p. 48.

Economy of the Trinity will cease."[1] His theology was Christocentric: "There is no other person of God but Christ . . . the entire Godhead of the Father is in him."[2] (2) Many of the Anabaptists were Arians. (3) A humanitarian view of Jesus, recognizing a miraculous birth, was beginning to claim attention. The last of these succeeded in establishing itself in the east of Europe before English Unitarians began to move.

4. THE SOCINIAN DEVELOPMENT

When Blandrata reached Poland in 1558, he found that there were already some anti-Trinitarians in the Protestant synod. Seven years later they were excluded, and they consequently formed a small group which refused to call itself by any other name than Christian, though other titles (such as the Minor Church) were sometimes applied to it. In 1579 the settlement of Faustus Socinus in their midst led to the establishment of a new theological type to be

[1] *Ib.* p. 82. [2] *Ib.* pp. 112 f.

long known in Western Europe as Socinianism.

Socinus (1539-1604) belonged to a distinguished Italian family, the Sozini, in Siena. His uncle Lelius Socinus (1525-62) had evaded the Inquisition by flight to Switzerland in 1547. He became the friend of Calvin and Melanchthon; he visited England; he travelled to Poland. He did not escape controversy and suspicion; he would not deny the doctrine of the Trinity, but he would accept it only in the words of Scripture. Faustus Socinus was of a more aggressive temper. At twenty-three years of age he published his *Explicatio primæ partis primi capitis Evangelii Johannis*,[1] in which he ascribed to Christ only an official and not an essential deity. A long series of works followed, and in 1578 he accepted an invitation from Blandrata, then in the service of Prince John Sigismund of Transylvania, and went to Kolozsvàr (Kluj). Blandrata had invoked his aid against Francis Dávid, who rejected all

[1] Rakow, 1662.

forms of cultus addressed to Christ.[1] Socinus pleaded for the *adoratio Christi* as obligatory on all Christians, and urged that the *invocatio Christi* should not be forbidden. In 1579 he settled in Poland, where the rest of his life was spent. The members of the Minor Church were converted to his views, which found expression in the *Racovian Catechism* issued in Polish in 1605, a year after his death.[2] A Latin edition followed in 1609. The Polish adherents of Socinus failed, however, to hold their ground. Deprived of their right to office, their leaders were powerless. Roman Catholic reaction triumphed. Their college at Rakow was suppressed, and finally in 1660 they were offered the option of conformity or exile. Some went to Germany and Holland; some carried their worship to Transylvania, and maintained a slender separate existence till 1793. But the influence of Socinus was perpetuated in the massive volumes of

[1] See below.

[2] The town of Rakow, founded in 1569, was the ecclesiastical base, with a school and university (1602).

the *Bibliotheca fratrum Polonorum quos Unitarios vocant*, published at Amsterdam (1665-69). His theology rested on a rigid view of the authority of Scripture.[1] The modern methods of historical criticism were of course unknown. Philosophy raised no difficulties about the supernatural, but reason started objections from the side of the multiplication-table.

"The essence of God is one," says the *Racovian Catechism*, "not in kind but in number. Wherefore it cannot in any way contain a plurality of persons, since a person is nothing else than an individual intelligent essence. Wherever then there exist three numerical persons, there must necessarily in like manner be reckoned three individual essences, for in the same sense in which it is affirmed that there is one numerical essence, it must be held that there is one numerical person."[2]

But Socinus admitted the application of the term "God" to Christ in an inferior sense (John 10^{34f}), and argued

[1] His treatise *de Auctoritate S. Scripturæ*, written in 1570, was first published at Seville, and claimed by a Jesuit Lopex as his own. Commended in 1728 in a charge by Bishop Smallbrooke, it was translated into English by Edward Combe in 1731.

[2] Eng. trans. by Thomas Rees, London, 1818, § iii. ch. i. p. 33.

from John 3^{13} that after his baptism Christ had been conveyed to heaven, where he had beheld his Father, and heard from him the things which he was afterwards sent back to earth to teach. Raised again to heaven after his resurrection, he was made the head of all creation, with divine authority over the world, and in that sense God. He was thus no "mere man," and deserved divine honour. Modern Unitarianism has departed widely from this Christology. Apart from the necessarianism of Priestley, it is nearer to Socinus in its view of human nature, which he treated (against the Calvinists) as endowed with free will, and capable of virtue and religion. But the Polish Unitarians did not regard it as intrinsically immortal. A future life would be a gift direct from God, its conditions being made known by Christ. For those who did not fulfil them there was no hell, only extinction.

Unitarianism acquired ecclesiastical status also in the adjoining province of Transylvania. In 1563 Blandrata was invited by Queen Isabella to the court of

her son Prince John Sigismund. At Kolozsvàr he was brought into contact with Francis Dávid, who had been sent by his Roman Catholic teachers to Wittenberg. There Dávid had passed into Lutheranism, but afterwards, dissatisfied with its doctrine of the sacraments, he joined the Calvinists. His distinction led to his appointment (1564) as bishop of the Hungarian churches in Transylvania. Under Blandrata's influence he began to doubt the separate personality of the Holy Spirit, and became involved in discussions with the Calvinist leader, Peter Melius. In these debates Melius is said to have first used the word *Unitarius*. Dávid was strong enough to carry large numbers of clergy and laity with him. In 1568 a royal edict was issued, granting entire freedom of conscience and speech, and giving legal recognition to "the Four Religions," Roman Catholicism, Lutheranism, Calvinism (or Reformed), and "the Klausenburg Confession." More than 400 preachers with their churches, and many pro-

fessors in colleges and schools, ranged themselves under Dávid's supervisorship. Dávid, however, soon advanced another step, and questioned the propriety of prayer to Christ. Blandrata's attempt to influence him through Faustus Socinus (1578) did not convince him, and in the following year, under a Roman Catholic prince, Dávid was tried for innovation in doctrine and sentenced to imprisonment. Five months later (Nov. 1579) he died in the castle of Déva in his seventieth year.

The name *Unitarius* first appeared in an authoritative document in a decree of the Synod of Lécsfalva in 1600. It was formally adopted by the Church in 1638. For two centuries after Dávid's death the community was in frequent danger from political and religious vicissitudes. Their churches were transferred to Calvinists or to Roman Catholics; they were deprived of their schools; they were debarred from public office. A statute of 1791, however, confirmed their position as one of "the Four Religions," and they have since enjoyed ecclesiastical peace.[1] They have now about 140 churches, chiefly among the Szeklers of Transylvania, with a few in Hungary, including a vigorous modern foundation in Buda-Pesth. Till 1919 their bishop sat in the Hungarian House of Peers. At Kolozsvàr they have a university, and they have devoted great attention to education. No doctrinal subscription is imposed upon their ministers, and under the influence of progressive change, and contact with Unitarian teaching in England and America, the Socinian Christology has been abandoned. The official hymn-book of 1865 made no provision for the worship of Christ.

5. GROWTH OF UNITARIANISM IN ENGLAND

The teaching of Socinus gradually made its way into England. The Latin

[1] Cf. Michael Lombard Szentabrahâmi, *Summa Universæ Theologiæ Christianæ secundum Unitarios*, Klausenburg, 1787. The above was written before the great majority of Unitarian Churches passed under Rumanian rule by the Peace of 1919.

version of the *Racovian Catechism* was sent to England with a dedication to James I; it was formally burned in 1614. Two Socinian works appear in the first two catalogues of the Bodleian Library (1620-35), but a considerable number may be traced in the catalogue by Thomas Hyde in 1674. Bishop Barlow, himself once librarian, in *Directions for the Choice of Books in the Study of Divinity* (originally drawn up in 1650 and expanded after 1673), named numerous others in connexion with a syllabus of the principal questions at issue between Socinians and other Reformed communions.[1] Theology was deeply concerned with the claims of the Roman Catholics on the one hand and the controversies of the Puritans on the other, and from the days of Richard Hooker (1553-1600) a series of writers discussed the respective authority of the Church, the Scriptures, and reason. Doubtless revelation was necessary, but Scripture was its medium. If it was the

[1] *The Genuine Remains of Dr. Thomas Barlow, late Bishop of Lincoln*, London, 1693.

teacher of theology, what was theology, asked Hooker, but the science of divine things? and "what science," he went on to ask, "can be attained unto without the help of natural discourse and reason?"[1] The Arminian revolt against Calvinism tended in the same direction, and "the ever memorable" John Hales (1584-1656), when he left the Synod of Dort after hearing Episcopius expound John 3^{16}, "bid John Calvin good night."[2] A stream of protest flowed on against the attempt to define the mysteries of the Godhead beyond the terms of Scripture. It had been the plea of Acontius in the *Stratagemata Satanæ*; and William Chillingworth (1602-44) owned him as his teacher of the mischief of creeds which led to the "persecuting, burning, cursing, damning of men for not subscribing to the words of men as the words of God."[3] Chillingworth was

[1] *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, bk. iii. ch. viii. 11, ed. Keble, Oxford, 1836, i. 473.

[2] Letter of Anthony Farindon (17th Sept. 1657) prefixed to the *Golden Remains*, London, 1659.

[3] *The Religion of Protestants*, Oxford, 1638, iv. § 16, referring to Acontius, vii.

indebted for acquaintance with Socinian literature to Lord Falkland. He had seen some volumes in the rooms of Hugh Cressy of Merton College, Oxford, who "claimed to have been the first to bring in Socinus's books." Cressy afterwards became a Benedictine monk; Falkland was designated by John Aubrey "the first Socinian in England." Other and wider influences were at work. Lord Herbert of Cherbury (1583-1648) in his *de Veritate*[1] analysed the whole faculties of the mind, and discovered among its *notitiæ communes*, innate, of divine origin, and indisputable, certain "common notions" of religion in five articles. These he exemplified historically twenty years later in the *de Religione Gentilium* (completed in 1645), one of the earliest treatises in comparative theology. The great authority of Grotius (1583-1645) gave special weight to his exposition of Christianity in the *de Veritate Religionis Christianæ*.[2] He discourses of the attributes of God, but is silent about his triune nature. He proves that there

[1] Paris, 1624, London, 1633. [2] Leyden, 1627.

was such a person as Jesus, that he rose from the grave and was worshipped after his death. He vindicates his character as Messiah, but never mentions the Incarnation. His *Annotationes* on the New Testament were equally free from traditional dogma. It was not surprising that Stephen Nye, the author of the *Brief History of the Unitarians also called Socinians*,[1] should affirm that he "interpreted the whole according to the mind of the Socinians." Under such influences diversity of opinion was recognized as inevitable. Writers so different as Hales, Jeremy Taylor,[2] and Milton[3] declare in almost the same words that heresy is not a matter of the understanding; the faithful pursuit of reason did not make a heretic; the mischief lay in the influences that perverted the will. Chillingworth thought it possible to reduce all Christians to unity of communion by showing that diversity

[1] London, 1687.

[2] In the *Liberty of Prophesying*, London, 1646; ed. 1817, sect. ii. p. 32.

[3] In his last tract, *Of True Religion, Heresy, Schism, Toleration*, London, 1673, p. 6.

of opinion was no bar to it. That all Christians should think alike was an impossibility; it remained for them to be "taught to set a higher value upon those high points of faith and obedience wherein they agree than upon those points of less moment wherein they differ."[1] Such writers did not adopt the theology of Socinus, but they were in agreement with him in his plea for Scriptural statements rather than dogmatic creeds. "Vitals in religion," said Benjamin Whichcote (1609-83), the leader of the Cambridge Platonists, "are few."[2]

Meanwhile an occasional English traveller like Paul Best (1590-1657) had visited Poland and returned infected. Milton noticed in the *Areopagitica*[3] the "stay'd men" sent by "the grave and frugal Transilvanian" to learn the "theologic arts" of England. The danger of Socinianism was spreading. The Convocations of Canterbury and

[1] *Religion of Protestants*, iv. § 40, pp. 209 f.

[2] *Moral and Religious Axioms*, ed. Salter, London, 1753.

[3] London, 1644.

York agreed in June 1640 to prohibit the import, printing, or circulation of Socinian books; no minister should preach their doctrines; laymen who embraced their opinions should be excommunicated.[1] A series of angry writers denounced them with shrill abuse. Parliament made the denial of the Trinity a capital crime (1648), but an English translation of the *Racovian Catechism* was published in 1652 at Amsterdam, followed by *A Twofold Scripture Catechism* from the pen of John Biddle in 1654. These works led the Council of State to order John Owen, whom Cromwell had made Dean of Christ Church and Vice-Chancellor of the university of Oxford, to prepare a reply. His *Vindiciæ Evangelicæ* appeared in 1655.

"Do not *look* upon these things," he wrote with heat,[2] "as *things afar* off wherein you are *little concerned*; the *evill* is at the *doore*; there *is* not a *Citty*, a *Towne*, scarce a *Village* in *England*, wherein some of this poyson is not poured forth."

[1] Canons iv. and v. [2] 69.

6. INFLUENCE OF BIDDLE AND LOCKE

John Biddle (1616-62) has often been called the father of English Unitarianism. Sprung from the family of a Gloucestershire yeoman, he came up to Oxford in 1634, and graduated M.A. in 1641. The Gloucester magistrates appointed him shortly after to the mastership of the free school in the parish of St. Mary de Crypt. There his Biblical studies led him independently to doubt the doctrine of the Trinity, the particular difficulty being the deity of the Holy Ghost. Imprisonment in Gloucester and at Westminster did not prevent him from publishing his views, which became more and more opposed to the prevailing orthodoxy. Released in 1652, he founded for the first time gatherings for the exposition of the Scriptures on anti-Trinitarian lines, and these developed into regular meetings for worship. Biddle's catechism shows distinct Socinian influence in the views that Christ as man was taken up into heaven to be instructed for his prophetical office, that God's love was universal, and that

Christ died to reconcile man to God, not God to man. But Biddle did not adopt the Socinian practice of prayer to Christ. In spite of imprisonment and exile in the Scilly Islands (1654-58) he gathered followers in increasing numbers. They were sometimes called Biddelians, sometimes Socinians, but they are said to have preferred the name Unitarian to all others.[1]

The death of Biddle in 1662 and the Act of Uniformity checked the movement as an organization for worship, but it continued as a mode of thought. The constant plea for a return from the creeds to the Scriptures led Milton finally into an Arian Christology. Thomas Firmin (1632-97), a wealthy and generous mercer, who had been the friend of Biddle and also had close relations with Archbishop Tillotson (1630-94), promoted the circulation of literature. The *Brief History of the*

[1] The name has been found by Alex. Gordon in a controversy between Henry Hedworth and William Penn in 1672. The pamphlets are preserved in the Friends' Library at Devonshire House, Bishopsgate, London, E.C.

Unitarians, also called Socinians, was published at his request in 1687. The Toleration Act of 1689 excluded those who denied the Trinity on the one side, and Roman Catholics on the other. But an active controversy broke out the following year, which resulted in the production of a long series of Unitarian tracts (1691-1705) largely financed by Firmin, in which the chief ecclesiastical disputants, John Wallis and William Sherlock,[1] were cleverly played off against each other, and the argument was enforced on grounds of Scripture and early patristic testimony. The Unitarian influence was so strong that Parliament found it necessary (1698) to threaten the profession of the obnoxious heresy with cumulative penalties amounting to the loss of all civil rights, and three years' imprisonment. But in the meantime a new and powerful influence had entered the field. In 1695 John Locke (1632-1704) had published

[1] Cf. John Barling, *A Review of Trinitarianism*, London, 1847, p. 71; John Hunt, *Religious Thought in England*, 3 vols.; do. 1870-73, ii. 210 ff.

his treatise on *The Reasonableness of Christianity*.

Locke's *Letters concerning Toleration*[1] and his *Essay concerning Human Understanding*[2] had already placed him at the head of contemporary English thinkers. It was a lamentable sign of the heated temper of the time that the inquiry into the essential nature of Christianity was published anonymously. Locke did what Grotius and Hobbes (in the *Leviathan*[3]) had done before him. He went back to the Gospels and the first preachers of the new faith, and found that their message consisted in the proclamation of Jesus as the Messiah, the proof of this character resting on his fulfilment of prophecy and his miracles, especially the Resurrection. He had indeed already confided to his journal in 1681 the pregnant remark that the miracles were to be judged by the doctrine, and not the doctrine by the miracles. But he could still say in 1703 that the Scripture had God for its

[1] London, 1689-92. [2] London, 1690.
[3] London, 1651.

authority and truth without any mixture of error for its matter. This did not, however, prevent him from recognizing the occasional character of the apostolic letters; and in the paraphrases of the Epistles of St. Paul[1] (published after his death), by treating their teaching as relative to the age and persons for whom it was designed, he really laid the foundation of the historical method. His whole theory of knowledge, however, and his polemic against innate ideas, led him to fall back on the conception of revelation, and to find in Scripture an ultimate authority for religious truth. Meanwhile the violence of some of the Trinitarian controversialists drove many minds along the paths already trodden by Milton and Sir Isaac Newton in the direction of some form of Arianism. William Whiston (1672-1752), who had succeeded Newton at Cambridge as Lucasian professor in 1703, was deprived for this heresy in

[1] *A Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul to the Galatians, Corinthians, Romans, and Ephesians,* London, 1709.

1710; and it was in the background of the treatise of Samuel Clarke (1675-1729) on *The Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity*,[1] though he objected to the ancient Arian statement, "there was [a time] when there was no Son."

The formularies of the Church of England prevented anything like general change within its ranks. But Protestant Dissent was not organized on the basis of dogmatic creeds. The English Presbyterians under the leadership of Richard Baxter (1615-91) had ardently desired comprehension in the Establishment, but they had as ardently repudiated what they called "human impositions." Driven out of the Anglican Church, and unable to create a Presbyterian polity, they found themselves side by side with the Congregationalists in 1689. When they took out licences for places of worship, their trustees avoided doctrinal tests, though they themselves were mainly Calvinistic. They often devoted their chapels to "the worship of God by Protestant

[1] London, 1712.

Dissenters." Sometimes the Presbyterians were named, sometimes the Independents, sometimes both conjointly. They reserved to themselves, in the language of Timothy Jollie of Sheffield (1659-1714), "liberty to reform according to Scripture rule in doctrine, discipline and worship."[1] The way was thus open to gradual theological modification. The process was slow, and its operation unequal in different places. Pastors and people did not always move together. The transition through varying types of Arianism naturally took place at varying rates; *e.g.*, Nathaniel Lardner (1684-1768), after resting in Clarke's Arianism, finally abandoned it in his *Letter* on the Logos.[2] The result was that at the beginning of the 19th cent. nearly 200 chapels were occupied by Unitarians, whose principles were unfavourable to sectarian activity. When the Manchester Academy (now

[1] *Pastoral Care Exemplified* (funeral sermon for his father), London, 1704, p. 28.

[2] *A Letter writ in the Year 1730, concerning the Question whether the Logos supplied the Place of a Human Soul in the Person of Jesus Christ*, London, 1759.

Manchester College, Oxford) was opened in 1786, its first principal, Thomas Barnes, who dedicated it "to Truth, to Liberty, and to Religion," was himself an Arian. His colleague, Ralph Harrison, became a Unitarian. True to the practice of their forefathers, the founders refrained from imposing any tests on either tutors or students. The Presbyterian Board, established in 1689, governs the Presbyterian College at Carmarthen—the continuator of a series of academies, the first of which was founded on the same basis by Samuel Jones, sometime fellow of Jesus College, Oxford, one of the 2000 ejected ministers of 1662.

7. THE WORK OF PRIESTLEY AND BELSHAM

The process of theologic change was promoted from another side. Joseph Priestley (1733-1804), bred among the Independents, threw off the Calvinistic theology of his youth, and, after resting a little while in Arianism, reached in

1768, while minister at Leeds, a simple humanitarian view of the person of Jesus. His scientific studies had already gained him the fellowship of the Royal Society (1766), and his *Appeal to the Serious and Candid Professors of Christianity*[1] carried his name in 30,000 copies all over England. His industry, his wide range of knowledge, his clearness of thought and style, his fearless utterance, his untiring earnestness, his elevation of purpose and purity of life, his simple piety, secured for his theological and philosophical teaching a dominant position in Unitarian thought. At Doddridge's Academy at Daventry he had studied Hartley's *Observations on Man*,[2] and adopted a materialist view of human nature. But this in no way impaired the religion which he learned from the Gospels. The teachings of Jesus, guaranteed by his miracles and triumphantly established by his resurrection, supplied him with a positive ground for faith; and the identification of the God of revelation with the Sole

[1] London, 1770. [2] London, 1749.

Cause of all phenomena, including every form of human activity, created a type of religious sentiment which long pervaded Unitarian devotion. In his *Doctrine of Philosophical Necessity Illustrated*[1] he affirmed that his doctrine should produce "the deepest humility, the most entire resignation to the will of God, and the most unreserved confidence in his goodness and providential care."[2] Among the Yorkshire acquaintances of Priestley was Theophilus Lindsey (1723-1808), vicar of Catterick on the Tees. A movement had been started by a small group of the clergy of the Establishment for the relaxation of the terms of subscription. The failure of a petition to Parliament led Lindsey to resign his living (1773) and make his way to London. There in 1774 he opened an auction-room in Essex Street, Strand, as a Unitarian chapel, and thus "first organized Unitarian Dissent as a working force in the religious life of England."[3] He used

[1] London, 1777. [2] § ix.
[3] J. H. Allen, *History of Unitarians*, etc., p. 152.

the Anglican liturgy adapted to "the worship of the Father only."

The London movement was reinforced in 1789 by the appointment of Thomas Belsham (1750-1829), once like Priestley an Independent, to a theological tutorship in a college at Hackney. A scholar of no small attainments, he wielded a vigorous pen, and took a leading share in promoting the development of denominational activity. This was opened in 1791 by the foundation of the "Unitarian Society for promoting Christian knowledge and the Practice of Virtue by the Distribution of Books." Lindsey, Priestley, and Belsham were its leaders. The preamble and rules, drawn up by Belsham, contained the first public profession of belief in the proper unity of God, and of the simple humanity of Jesus Christ, in opposition both to the Trinitarian doctrine of three Persons in the Deity and to the Arian hypothesis of a created Maker and Preserver of the world. The love of civil and religious liberty prompted a petition the next year (1792) for the abolition of

the penal laws affecting religion, to which Charles James Fox lent his aid, and this was accomplished in 1813 (so far as Unitarians were concerned) by the repeal, through the efforts of William Smith (1756-1835), M.P. for Norwich, grandfather of Florence Nightingale, of the clauses of the Toleration Act which rendered the profession of Unitarianism illegal. Meanwhile local Unitarian associations had been founded, and a denominational literature was springing up. Chapels long closed were reopened; new congregations were assisted; a Unitarian Fund was started; and missionaries were sent out to various parts of the kingdom. Endowed by the Act of 1813 with civil rights, the Unitarians proceeded to form an association for protecting them (1819); and finally in 1825 a number of separate organizations were amalgamated in the British and Foreign Unitarian Association. This body was created to promote the principles of Unitarian Christianity. But its founders refrained from imposing any definition of them on its

adherents. In the spirit of the English Presbyterians of a century and a half before, they left each member free to interpret them for himself.

The type of Unitarianism then prevailing was largely shaped by the writings of Priestley and Belsham. There were still Arians of different degrees (designated as "high" and "low") among both ministers and congregations. But the emphasis of controversy fell more and more clearly on the humanity of Jesus, and the proof of this lay in the Scriptures. The doctrine of their plenary inspiration was indeed denied. Criticism had already distinguished different documents in Genesis. The narratives of the birth of Jesus were inconsistent with each other, and one or both might be rejected. But both the Old Testament and the New Testament contained "authentic records of facts and of divine interpositions," and Charles Wellbeloved, principal of Manchester College, York, could write in 1823:

"Convince us that any tenet is authorized by the Bible, from that moment we receive it. Prove any doctrine to be a doctrine of Christ, emanating from that wisdom which was from above, and we take it for our own, and no power on earth shall wrest it from us."[1]

On this basis Jesus was presented as "a man constituted in all respects like other men, subject to the same infirmities, the same ignorance, prejudices and frailties,"[2] who was chosen by God to introduce a new moral dispensation into the world. For this end the Holy Spirit was communicated to him at his baptism. He was instructed in the nature of his mission and invested with voluntary miraculous powers during his sojourn in the wilderness, and, thus equipped as the Messiah, was sent forth to reveal to all mankind without distinction the great doctrine of a future life in which men should be rewarded according to their works. Of this the supreme proof was found in the Resurrection, to which his death on the cross

[1] *Three Letters to Archdeacon Wrangham*, London, 1823, p. 51.

[2] Belsham, *A Calm Inquiry into the Scripture Doctrine concerning the Person of Christ*, London, 1811, p. 447.

as a martyr to the truth was a necessary preliminary; and he was destined to reappear to raise the dead and to judge the world. From this scheme all theories of atonement and satisfaction disappeared. Priestley with his usual frankness had admitted that a necessitarian "cannot accuse himself of having done wrong in the ultimate sense of the words."[1] But, though this type of Unitarianism was deficient in the sense of sin and produced a curious reluctance to recognize the existence of a "soul," its teachers lived habitually at a high moral tension, demanding a constant conformity of the will of man to the will of God. Associated with the emphatic assertion of the Father's wisdom and beneficence, such views naturally anticipated the final victory of good. Thomas Southwood Smith (1788-1861) in his *Illustrations of the Divine Government*[2]—a book warmly admired by Byron, Moore,

[1] *Illustrations of Philosophical Necessity*, 1777, § xi. (*Works*, ed. Rutt, iii. 518).

[2] Glasgow, 1816.

Wordsworth, and Crabbe—powerfully impressed on Unitarian thought the doctrine of universal restoration, which had already found utterance in one of Cromwell's chaplains, and gained various champions (Hartley among them) in the 18th century.[1]

8. LEGAL DIFFICULTIES

The modifications of belief which had brought many of the occupants of chapels erected by Presbyterians and Independents to Unitarian theology at last aroused the attention of those who remained orthodox. Besides a number of meeting-houses, the Unitarians were in possession of two important trusts—Lady Hewley's Charity in York (1704), and Dr. Williams's Trust in London (1716). A suit was instituted against Lady Hewley's trustees in 1830. Legal proceedings were slow and costly, and on 23rd Dec. 1833 judgment was finally given against them. One of the trustees

[3] See art. UNIVERSALISM.

was the minister of St. Saviourgate Chapel (which Lady Hewley had habitually attended), Charles Wellbeloved. It was at once seen that the whole tenure of the chapels was endangered. A long period of litigation followed, but the Law Lords finally confirmed the first decision in 1842. Meanwhile numbers of suits were threatened for the recovery of the buildings, burial-grounds, and endowments which had descended in undisputed succession through generations of pastors and laity. Between Lady Hewley's pastor, John Hotham, and Charles Wellbeloved there had been but one ministry, that of Newcome Cappe (1755-1800); the three pastorates covered 144 years. In the presence of such continuity of tenure the claim of the existing occupants was irresistible, and in 1844 the Dissenters' Chapels Act, introduced by the Government, gave the needed relief. Without naming either Presbyterians or Unitarians, it secured to such Dissenting congregations as had no creeds or tests the right to change their opinions as they saw fit in the

lapse of time.[1] The chapels subsequently built by Unitarians, and the funds raised for the support of their ministers, have been almost invariably founded on the principle known as "open trust." The consciousness of this historic evolution supplies the key to the conflict of tendencies in modern Unitarianism between the impulse to theological denominationalism and the desire to realize on however small a scale the "Catholic communion" which had been the ideal of the English Presbyterians who followed Baxter.

9. MARTINEAU AND THE MODERN SCHOOL

The most potent personal influence in the latter direction was that of James Martineau (1805-1900). In his first work, *The Rationale of Religious Inquiry*,[2] he abandoned the position of the older Unitarianism, which would

[1] Cf. the speech of W. E. Gladstone, on the second reading, *Parliamentary Debates on the Dissenters' Chapels Bill*, London, 1844 p. 165.

[2] London, 1836.

have accepted the doctrines of the Trinity, the Atonement, and everlasting torments, if they could be found in the Scriptures. "No seeming inspiration," he affirmed, "can establish anything contrary to reason."[1] Three years later in the famous Liverpool controversy (1839), in the midst of incisive criticisms of the evangelical scheme of salvation, he laid the foundations of a new view of revelation no longer as a communication of truth, certified by miracles, but as an appeal to the conscience and affections —and a fresh interpretation of the moral life on the basis of free will instead of necessity. Meanwhile he was reading Strauss, and soon reached the conclusion that belief in miracles was not essential to Christianity. The Messianic function of Jesus was thus undermined. Wellbeloved had already insisted on the contemporary significance of many of the prophecies supposed to refer to Christ. When the miracles were disowned, the second guarantee of the supernatural character of Jesus fell

[1] *Rationale*, p. 127.

away: the followers of Locke found themselves deprived of their "reasonable" Christianity, and the faith of Christ seemed to become only a superior kind of natural religion. Martineau meanwhile pursued a double line of study. In a group of articles in the *Westminster Review* he expounded the Tübingen reconstruction of the origins of Christianity on its critical side, while on the philosophical he vindicated the communion of the human spirit with the Divine, and presented Jesus as the expression, within the limits of our nature, of the righteousness and love of God. Revelation was thus transformed from supernatural instruction into the realization of more exalted character; its medium was not a written word, but a higher personality. To establish the principles of spiritual theism and find a place in man's soul for that "dwelling in God and God in him" which Priestley had described as the highest type of personal devotion was the aim of a long series of brilliant articles in the *Prospective* and *National Reviews*, which cul-

minated in two great treatises, *Types of Ethical Theory*[1] and *A Study of Religion*.[2] By these works, as well as by his sermons and occasional *Addresses*, he exercised an influence which went far beyond his own denomination, so that Gladstone described him as " the greatest of living [English] thinkers."[3]

Other writers were not inactive beside him. The saintly John James Tayler (1797-1869), in his *Retrospect of the Religious Life of England*,[4] delineated with singular breadth of view and literary charm the significance of contrasted principles of authority and freedom; and from his pen came the first formal discussion of the Johannine question in England in his *Attempt to ascertain the Character of the Fourth Gospel*.[5] A long series of scholars had pleaded for the revision both of the text and of the translation of the New Testament; and by the advice of the veteran

[1] 2 vols., Oxford, 1885. [2] 2 vols., Oxford, 1888.

[3] J. E. Carpenter, *James Martineau, Theologian and Teacher*, London, 1905, p. 413.

[4] London, 1845, new ed. by J. Martineau, do. 1876.

[5] London, 1867.

John Kenrick, George Vance Smith was invited to join the company of the Revisers (1870). In James Drummond (1835-1918) Unitarianism possessed a theologian of the old school of learning, whose works on *The Jewish Messiah* (1877), *Philo Judæus* (1888), *Inquiry into the Character and Authorship of the Fourth Gospel* (1903), and *Studies in Christian Doctrine* (1908) maintained the tradition of devout scholarship. John Relly Beard (1800-76) led the way to modern dictionaries of the Bible by his *People's Dictionary of the Bible*,[1] and made other valuable contributions to theological literature. Cultivated laymen, also, such as Edgar Taylor, Samuel Sharpe, and H. A. Bright, rendered no small services to the Unitarian cause. Most influential of all, perhaps, in its protest against prevailing supernaturalism was *The Creed of Christendom*[2] by William Rathbone Greg. Francis William Newman and Frances Power Cobbe found many readers; and the

[1] 2 vols., London, 1847-48.

[2] London, 1851, 8th ed., 2 vols., 1883.

writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Theodore Parker, together with the studies of Max Müller, opened the way to religion beyond the bounds of Christianity. The Hibbert Trustees, who sought to promote the spread of Christianity, in "its simplest and most intelligible form," were the first to inaugurate in 1878 a series of lectures on the history of religions, and Manchester College included that subject in its theological course as early as 1875. The discourses of Martineau, J. Hamilton Thom, and Charles Beard provided varied illustration of the preacher's power; and the sermons and hymns of Stopford Brooke, after his withdrawal from the Church of England in 1880, presented, with a rich glow of poetic beauty, the main features of religion as understood by Unitarians.

10. CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS

While English Unitarians have been active in education and philanthropy (witness their domestic missions in important urban centres, established on unsectarian principles after the visit of Joseph Tuckerman of Boston, Mass., in 1833), they have not attempted to secure large numerical increase. New chapels have been built, but denominational zeal has never been active. Congregational independence has been sturdily maintained. In 1882 a National Conference was organized, which has now 357 congregations in the United Kingdom on its roll, but they have no common name. Proposals for united action on Presbyterian lines were made by Martineau in 1888, but the demand for congregational autonomy defeated them. The individualism fostered by the constant plea for liberty is unfavourable to the growth of corporate church-life. Generous funds have been raised in aid of ministers' incomes and insurance, and the Conference has found it necessary to lay down educational qualifications for access to these benefits, and has thus constituted an accredited class of religious teachers. Unitarianism has thriven actively in some

districts of Wales, but it has little hold in Scotland. The oldest of its congregations north of the Tweed was founded at Edinburgh in 1776. In Ireland Thomas Emlyn was prosecuted at Dublin in 1703 for denying the deity of Christ. Ulster Presbyterianism witnessed a movement against subscription which culminated in 1726 in the formation of a separate Presbytery of Antrim on a non-subscription basis. Many of the ministers passed through Arianism to Unitarianism, and in 1830 the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster was formed. At the same time, largely through the zeal of Martineau, then assistant pastor in Dublin, an Irish Unitarian Christian Society, embracing both individuals and congregations, was established in Dublin which was merged (1835) in an Association of Irish Non-subscribing Presbyterians and other Free Christians, including the Presbytery of Antrim, the Synod of Munster, and the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster. Finally, in 1910 the Antrim Presbytery and the Ulster Synod united for purposes of

church government under the name of the Non-subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland.

II. UNITARIANISM IN AMERICA

Unitarianism in America sprang out of the Congregational order of the New England churches. Their theology was Calvinistic, but the 17th cent. foundations were based upon religious covenants instead of dogmatic creeds. Thus the First Church in Boston affirmed:

> "We . . . do hereby solemnly and religiously promise and bind ourselves to walk in all our ways according to the rule of the Gospel, and in all sincere conformity to Christ's holy ordinances, and in mutual love and respect to each other, so near as God shall give us grace."[1]

The way was thus open, as in English Dissent in the 18th cent., to gradual theologic change. The literature of the Trinitarian controversy passed across the Atlantic, and the leaven of discussion in the works of Sherlock and South,

[1] Allen, p. 171.

Clarke and Whiston, supplemented by the writings of the Unitarian Emlyn, began to produce its effect. A slow movement towards Arianism and Arminianism set in, invigorated by reaction against the " great awakening " under Jonathan Edwards (1735) and the early preaching of George Whitefield (1740). Jonathan Mayhew (1720-66) and Charles Chauncy (1705-57), pastors in Boston, led the way towards a more liberal faith. Under the ministry of James Freeman (1759-1835) the congregation of King's Chapel purged their Anglican liturgy of all references to the Trinity (1785). By this act, says the historian of the chapel, the first Episcopal church in New England became the first Unitarian church in the New World. The writings of Priestley and Lindsey were freely circulated, and at the end of the century the doctrine against which they protested had been rejected by all the Boston ministers but one. The name Unitarian was indeed rarely attached to the churches, but the mode of thought and worship prevailed more and more

widely. It was found all the way from Portland (Maine) to Charleston (South Carolina).

In 1803 William Ellery Channing (1780-1842) came to Boston and began the ministry which so powerfully influenced Unitarian thought. In reaction against a still powerful Calvinism, with its doctrines of human depravity, the wrath of God, and the atoning sacrifice of Christ, he proclaimed " one sublime idea," which he defined as " the greatness of the soul, its divinity, its union with God by spiritual likeness, its receptivity of his Spirit, its self-forming power, its destination to ineffable glory, its immortality."[1] This was the real challenge to New England orthodoxy; it operated with no less force in dispelling the materialism of Priestley and giving a fresh impulse of spiritual life to Unitarianism on both sides of the ocean. With this exalted view of man's true being, Channing de-

[1] J. W. Chadwick, *William Ellery Channing*, Boston, 1903, p. 246, quoting without date " one of the letters of his later life."

clared himself surer that his rational nature was from God than that any book is the expression of his will; and reason and conscience were thus enthroned in the ultimate seat of judgment. Neither philosopher nor scholar in the technical sense, he exercised by his religious genius and the force of his ethical appeal a far-reaching influence both in the United States and in Europe. "Always young for liberty," he protested against every form of sectarian narrowness. He cheerfully took the name Unitarian because unwearied efforts were made to raise against it a popular cry, and he never was in any sense a Trinitarian. But he believed in Christ's pre-existence; he accepted his miracles. He would not, however, exclude from his fellowship the stoutest humanitarian, though he might repudiate the miracles altogether. For such a mind denominational aggressiveness was impossible, and this spirit was infused into the leaders of the movement which culminated in the foundation of the Divinity School of Harvard University

in 1816, when the Unitarian controversy was at its height.

"It being understood," said the constitution, "that every encouragement be given to the serious, impartial, and unbiassed investigation of Christian truth; and that no assent to the peculiarities of any denomination be required either of the Students, or Professors, or Instructors."

The movement of which Channing was the most distinguished representative soon demanded some kind of organization. Literature must be circulated, congregations assisted, and churches built. In 1825, on the same day on which English Unitarians formed their association,[1] the American Unitarian Association was constituted. A noble line of eminent scholars, theologians, historians, jurists, poets, statesmen, accepted its principles and gave dignity to its profession of faith. It was not long, however, before new forces appeared on the field. The study of German philosophy produced a school of New England transcendentalism. Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-82) re-

[1] See § 7.

signed the pulpit of the Second Church in Boston on the question of the observance of the Lord's Supper, and six years later his famous " Address to the Harvard Divinity School " (1838) signalized the breach of the new thought with the older views of revelation and miracle. Theodore Parker (1810-60) emphasized the same theme in a much criticized sermon on " The Transient and Permanent in Christianity " (1841), followed by his widely read " Discourse of Matters pertaining to Religion " (1842). A new type of Christianity without miracle was thus presented, emphasizing the divine immanence in nature, and holding up the religion of Jesus—the love of God and the service of man—as the " absolute religion." Unitarianism fell into the snare from which Channing would fain have saved it, and developed an orthodoxy of its own. When Henry Whitney Bellows of New York proposed to organize the churches (1865) in a National Conference, and its members adopted the declaration that they were " disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ," a

group of bolder spirits formed a " Free Religious Association," where Emerson's name appeared first on the list. In 1894, however, the Conference repudiated all authoritative tests, and simply accepted " the religion of Jesus, holding, in accordance with his teaching, that practical religion is summed up in love to God and love to man."[1] The developments of criticism, science, and philosophy, the study of comparative religion, the desire for the widest possible fellowship, and the growing demands of philanthropy, have all contributed to broaden the outlook in every direction, and in 1900 the " International Council of Unitarian and other Liberal Religious Thinkers and Workers" was formed in Boston. It has since held large and successful gatherings in London, Amsterdam, Geneva, Boston, Berlin (1910), Paris (1913), and Boston (1920), assembling a wide representation of different nationalities and faiths.

As in England, so also in America,

[1] George Willis Cooke, " Unitarianism in the United States," *Ency. Brit.*[11] xxvii. 596.

Unitarianism has been an important influence in religious thought. It represents a mode of approach to the great problems of human life and destiny in which it is closely allied with the time-spirit. Its looseness of denominational organization makes its advance over so vast an area slow and hesitating, but its churches steadily increase, and in 1921 the list (including Canada) comprised 452 societies. The Divinity School at Harvard University gradually broadened out under the administration of Charles W. Eliot (1869-1909) into a school of scientific theology and independent research. The Meadville Theological School (Pennsylvania), founded in 1844, and the Unitarian Theological School at Berkeley (California), founded in 1904, have remained more definitely within Unitarian lines.

12. WORLD-WIDE INFLUENCE

(*a*) *The Colonies and India.*—The British Dominions, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Africa, all have Unitarian churches. English and American Unitarians are also in close touch with the Theistic churches of India, and with Unitarian work in Japan, and receive students from the Far East into their theological colleges, besides sending out representative ministers to preach and lecture.

(*b*) *Germany.*—Continental thought has been affected by the same general influences which produced the Unitarian movement in England and America. The writings of the English Deists of the 18th cent. helped to foster German rationalism, and the critical study of the Scriptures led to the abandonment of doctrines of mechanical inspiration and Biblical authority. Belief in miracles was partly undermined by the influences of science and philosophy; and the *Leben Jesu*[1] of D. F. Strauss, together with the investigations of F. C. Baur into the development of the early Church, opened new paths for the historical treatment of the origins of Christianity. The results reached by

[1] 3 vols., Tübingen, 1835.

Baur were modified by the subsequent researches of some of his own pupils, but a powerful school of thought, led by teachers such as H. Holtzmann (Strassburg), C. Holsten (Heidelberg), Carl von Weizsäcker (Tübingen), A. E. Biedermann (Zürich), R. A. Lipsius (Jena), O. Pfleiderer (Berlin), reached a position which was substantially Unitarian, though it did not employ the name or lead to withdrawal from the State Church. In 1863 a liberal union was founded under the title of the "Protestantenverein," which gave practical expression to this mode of thought. It still exists, though in a state of somewhat diminished activity. Recent theological liberalism has tended to take one of two directions. Under the influence of Albrecht Ritschl of Göttingen, a higher value has been ascribed to the person of Jesus, quite apart from external miracle, than was usual among the older "liberal" theologians. Among the leaders in this direction are A. Harnack, W. Herrmann (Marburg), and H. H. Wendt (Jena). On the other

hand, the study of Christianity in connexion with the religions of the empire has led younger scholars to emphasize its relations with contemporary phenomena; and along these lines the late professors W. Wrede, J. Weiss, and W. Bousset, and the brilliant group led by H. Gunkel, E. Troeltsch, C. Clemen, H. Weinel, W. Heitmüller, and H. Lietzmann have all been working. The valuable translation and commentary issued under the general editorship of Johannes Weiss,[1] and the long series of *Religionsgeschichtliche Volksbücher*, represent the general attitude of liberal theology on the problems of primitive Christianity.

(*c*) *France.*—A similar movement of thought, though more limited in range, may be traced in France, since the appearance of Renan's *Vie de Jesus*,[2] within the Reformed Church, represented especially by A. Coquerel (*fils*), Albert and Jean Réville, and a distinguished group of scholars and preachers. When

[1] *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, 2 vols., Göttingen, 1906.

[2] Paris, 1863.

the " Séparation " took place in 1905, the Reformed Church split into two bodies, the " National Union of Evangelical Reformed Churches " retaining a Confession of 1872, and the liberal group designating itself the " National Union of Reformed Churches," which is powerfully represented in the Theological Faculty of Paris, and exercises the greater influence both in the pulpit and in the press. Liberal Lutherans like Maurice Goguel and Eugene Ehrhardt share the same general view.

(*d*) *Switzerland.*—Swiss Protestantism has been affected in like manner. The abolition of formal tests of orthodoxy by the Genevan Church opened the way for a type of Christianity essentially Unitarian; and in German Switzerland the theologians of Basel and Zürich have made important contributions to both Biblical and dogmatic studies on similar lines. Practical interest in social questions is now to some extent withdrawing attention from the critical and historical inquiries of the older liberalism, and even leading to a partial

reaction towards the language and ideas of orthodoxy.

(*e*) *Holland.*—A similar tendency shows itself in Holland. In the second half of the 19th cent. the Dutch Reformed Church, the Remonstrants, the Mennonites, and the Lutherans were all affected by the philosophical and scientific modes of thought which generate Unitarian theology. Scholars like J. H. Scholten, A. Kuenen, and C. P. Tiele educated successive generations of students in the newer methods of critical investigation. Many of the younger ministers of the present day, however, without returning to orthodoxy, are more inclined to recognize spiritual values in some of the old doctrines of the Church, and, while they claim to be " liberals," are at the same time unwilling to be classed as " modern." Their view of human nature is not optimistic. The natural man must be regenerated by the Spirit of Christ; for this generation there is no other way.

(*f*) *Other countries.*—In Italy a little group, assisted by various university

professors, is conducting a monthly periodical, *Il Progresso Religioso*, on Unitarian lines with the names of Mazzini and Channing blazoned upon its cover. There are Unitarian congregations in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. The veteran poet Matthias Jochumssen in Iceland (†1920) espoused the same cause, and communicated his enthusiasm to his countrymen in the United States. Even among the educated negroes of Lagos on the W. African coast religious thought has produced spontaneously an active movement in the same direction.

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The essays in this volume deal only with a selection from many religious subjects on which Unitarianism has a distinctive message. It is, however, hoped they will adequately demonstrate the fact that Unitarian thought is not unprogressive, and that it will have some effect on the constancy with which statements of faith made by Unitarians a century ago are quoted as representative of the modern message.

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